



**For Immediate Release  
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**STATE REQUESTS ALL TOWNS AND MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS  
TEMPORARILY CEASE PERMITTING OF OPEN BURNING**

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Office of the Massachusetts State Fire Marshal today requested that all towns and municipal fire departments throughout the Commonwealth cease permitting of open burning. DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington and State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan issued a joint letter to heads of fire departments throughout the state requesting the moratorium.

“DCR and the Fire Marshal will assess wildfire conditions on Monday and determine if further mitigating measures are warranted,” said Commissioner Burrington. “We have prioritized wildfire detection, and will remain vigilant until this danger has passed.”

No outright ban on open burning has been issued at this time. However, DCR, which issued a wildfire advisory on Tuesday, March 28, said a ban may be declared if Saturday’s forecasted precipitation is not enough to alleviate current hazardous wildfire conditions.

Massachusetts is currently experiencing its driest March since 1915: recorded precipitation in Boston this month was 85% below average. The entire state’s Fire Danger level has been rated Extreme due to dryness, fuel moisture, and gusty winds. Today, the National Weather Service declared a Red Flag Warning for Essex, Middlesex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Worcester, Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties. This is the most severe of all wildfire advisories issued by NWS, indicating both high fire danger and a high possibility that a fire will spread rapidly.

“Right now, we need the public’s help,” added Burrington. “We ask that people not smoke or cook outside, and that they report any fires they may see to local authorities.”

Local Fire Chiefs and DCR District Fire Wardens can be contacted for more information.

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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